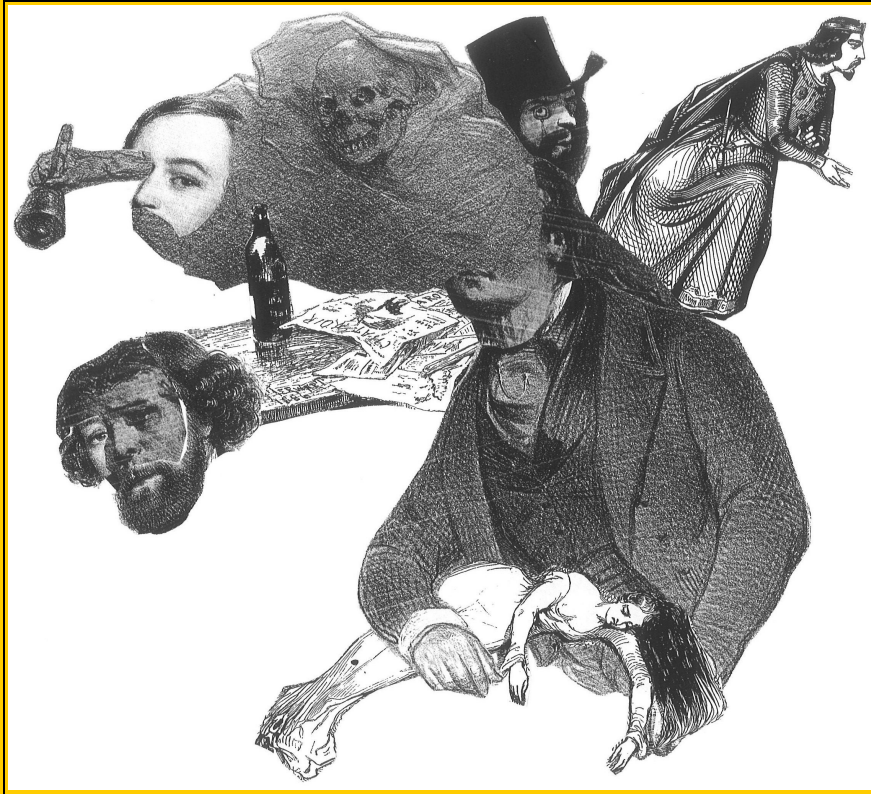


Rêvenance

A Zine of Hauntings from Underground Histories

Issue No. 2

August 2017 (A.Da. 101, A.H. 187)



Featuring

The Dead: Marceline Desbordes-Valmore / Arthur Cravan / Célestin Nanteuil /
The Chat Noir / Ivan Gilkin / Roger de Beauvoir / Fernand Clerget / Albert
Sérieys / Francis Vielé-Griffin / "The German Princess" / Alphonse Karr / Charles-
Henry Hirsch / Charles Whitehead / John Payne / Léon Gozlan

The Living: Olchar E. Lindsann / Gleb Kolomiets / Elizabeth Birdsall / Raymond
E. André III

Rêvenance is dedicated to the forgotten or untold histories of 19th Century avant-garde and other countercultures. It promotes history practiced as game, as activism, as trans-generational collaboration, as communal memory, which runs athwart the academic, refuses to describe history as finished, which does not stand apart to observe its object from a distance, in the posture of false 'objectivity' which Power always assumes. Instead: a *committed* historiography, which does not stand outside the stream of time or apart from its object: intellectual and precise, yet ludic and multi-form, one moment manifest as an essay, the next as a poem. A historiography created *within* the utopian fringe, and for the same community, responsive to our changing conditions, needs, and desires. A historiography that *we take personally*, which merges imperceptibly into daily life, thought, and continued experimental practice and life.

The journal is closely integrated with the Revenant Archive of roughly 500 books, prints, manuscripts, and personal items from the 19th Century avant-garde, and much of the material is drawn from the archive's material. The journal explores forgotten and newly-discovered histories of avant-garde, radical activist, utopian, and other underground countercultures. While the primary focus is on the 19th Century, earlier and later material is also welcome, and contributions directly connecting counter-cultural movements and strategies across time are particularly encouraged. The primary goal is to explore histories, communi-

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ties, and themes that are not consistently represented elsewhere. ***Rêvenance*** seeks to develop a community of independent DIY researchers who see historical work as part of a communal praxis directed toward contemporary and future change; it is a laboratory in which countercultural history is transmuted, reflected and disseminated in the current lifestyle, writing, music, art, and thought of present-day communities of dissent or otherness.

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Many of the source texts are available online at gallica.bnf.fr and/or at archive.org.

Cover image by Olchar E. Lindsann, collaged from: Célestin Nanteuil, *Portrait of Roger de Beauvoir* (c.1840) & *De Profonds des amours* (c.1850), Merwart, *Editorial Breakfast at the Chat Noir* (1887), Jules Platier, *The Artistic Dandy* (1842), Baron & Nanteuil, Illustration for Fénelon's *Telemachus* (1840), and an anonymous frontispiece to Joseph Bouchardy's *Paris the Bohemian* (1842). All constituent images are photocopied from original editions held in the Revenant Archive.

Send Submissions & Correspondence to monoclelash@gmail.com

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pRe-face to Some Potential Histories

In Response to Kolomiets' *What Governs the History of Art?* (2017)

by Olchar E. Lindsann

In the first issue of *Rêvenance*, Gleb Kolomiets spoke directly to the heart of this journal's goals in his call to, "reclaim historical narrative for personal needs or for needs of a community," identifying five structural "points of subjection" through which historical narrative and analysis tend to support state, corporate, and reactionary interests, and offering potential strategies to build what I have elsewhere called a radical historiography.¹ What is offered is the basis for a concerted and systematic exploration of what such a self-consciously *dynamic* and contrarian experience of communal history might become – not only within the cultural realm but for *all* socially, politically, and economically marginal communities – and this important venture elicits response.

For this reason, I intend here to respond with a few ideas that it provoked, and to preface my more long-term response to the essay through a series of related historical etudes. I invite further responses, and other potential systems; indeed, much of the material in *Rêvenance* could already be thought of in these terms. I will offer a few additional ideas as well, which might well be taken up for further exploration or application.

Kolomiets begins by warning us about the totalizing tendency of historical narrative,

- 1 Gleb Kolomiets, "What Governs the History of Art?" in *Rêvenance*, No. 1, Sept. 2016. mOnocle-Lash Anti-Press: Roanoke, VA, pp 6–8; and Olchar E. Lindsann, *Toward a Radical Historiography: Creative Sociality and the Traditions of Dissent*. 2011. Mycelium Samizdat Publishers: Decentralised. Both available online at the Internet Archive, archive.org

wherein, “the objects of historical narrative are in a subordinate position to the general rules of the organization of narrative and time.” In addition to the strategies that he offers in response, the *archive* offers an existing model which (as the Rêvenant Archive attempts) can be radicalized as an historical model that is spatial and combinatory, ludic rather than linear and “necessary”. Each element in an archive is a discrete unit, and their constituent artifacts (and the stories and contexts they carry with{in} them) can be organised simultaneously according to many different principles: chronological but also communal, bibliographic, linguistic, alphabetical, by provenance, origin, format, or even colour.

Another form with which some experimentation has begun is that of role-playing games, in which the “readers” of history inhabit the historical and psychological situations of the past. Since “actual” historical narrative and causality are suspended and (literally) open to play, historical emphasis is thrust upon *conditions*, rather than chronology, and problem-solving becomes the principle conduit of historical understanding. In this way, history is learned as a *strategic* faculty, and more directly applicable to present-day progressive practice. The role-playing game *Romantique*, set in the Paris cultural underground c.1830, is currently in development and play-testing and attempts to explore this possibility.²

Kolomiets warns in a footnote that subconscious conditioning remains an inevitable threat to any attempt to contest dominant structures. This threat might be met, and new positive strategies developed, by applying and adapting Surrealist and other psychoactivist methods to historiographic work. This area offers great potential for further development, to which the work of Lacan, Certeau, de Landa, and others provide glimpses. What would an oneirocritical history look like? A libidinal historiography? An automatic chronicle? How might chance procedures intervene in the research or analytical processes?

2 By Warren Fry and Olchar Lindsann. An earlier game set in 1920s Paris, *Zietgeist*, served as a prototype but has yet to see publication. Experiments in this area exist outside the avant-garde as well, cf. Paul Mason, “Culture Club: Role-Playing as a means of experiencing different modes of thought,” in *Interactive Fantasy: The Journal of Role-Playing and Story-making Systems*, No. 3, 1995.

To the five points of subjection identified by Kolomiets, I would offer a couple more. The first is *Communal Alienation* from history as both a presence and a process: both historical knowledge (presence) and especially research (agency) are too often relegated to specialists within a subculture, “contracted out” as it were, so that it fails to remain a living, active force in the community’s continued life and development. Unless each of us is a historian in some small but engaged way, and shares that engagement with each other, our relationship to history and to time becomes passive. The linearity of conventional narrative can obscure the *continued* applicability and responsibility of history within the present and for the future, and weaken the contextual awareness and effectiveness of a subculture as a whole.

The second point of subjection, *Academic De-radicalization*, is related to the first. When those working and living within alternative traditions become alienated from their own histories, they cede the ground to academic scholars who, as avatars of Power, all too often manipulate our own narratives. They are either constructed so as to support that power (cf. Duchamp’s readymades offered as antecedent for the commercialization of visual art via Pop, Conceptual Art, etc.) or to make our history itself disappear (cf. The slew of pre-Marxist socialist and proto-anarchist collectives, from the Athenaeum group to the Saint-Simonists to the Evadamists, who have been nearly forgotten even within radical culture). To combat both, we need historiographic work to become more widespread, more grass-roots, more personalized, in order to be decentralized, democratic and vital.

Another aspect I would add: in addition to historians, who continually renew and communicate with the past, we need *chroniclers* committed to communicating with the future: stewards of future histories. For models we might look to the Medieval chroniclers, the multi-volume French Romanticist anthologies of satirical chronicles of Parisian life, Decadent and Symbolist Roman-à-clefs, the Zurich “Dada Chronicle”, and much of Jim Leftwich’s recent activity.

All of the above may be expanded upon in the future by myself and (hopefully) others, but my first campaign shall take the form of six short, experimental historiographic test-

cases to interrogate and build on the foundation of each of Kolomiets' five points of subjection. These will be published over the course of Issues 3 – 8. The object of investigation in each essay will be chosen in accordance with the historiographic principle to be explored; some will deal with better-known avant-history such as Dada, some with history already fallen prey to the master narrative, such as the avant-Romanticism, with overlap between essays in order to see how different approaches yield different views of the same "topics". These will be thought-experiments, not in-depth studies, and will rely primarily upon my on-hand knowledge applied to the model in question; the word *essay*, after all, is rooted in the *attempt*. Their aim will be to suggest further avenues of study and to instigate and refine new historical methods, awarenesses, and strategies. They constitute a *next* step, not a final step:

1. **Temporal Organisation.**³ A cyclical narrative telling the story of several riots, including those at the premiers of *The Burgraves*, *The Gas Heart*, *Hernani*, *Hurléments en faveur de Sade*, *The Rite of Spring*, *Tannhäuser*, and two different productions of *Ubu Roi*.
2. **Composition of Narrative.**⁴ A heroic-investigative poem on the 1830 Battle of *Hernani*.
3. **Totalization.** A triplicate list of as many people as possible who participated in some way in the Dada movement—in any journal, exhibition, manifesto, performance, collaboration, or demonstration. One version will be organised by Name, one by Medium, and one by Locality, with redundancies where appropriate. No other narrative or

3 Works which have begun to address this point of subjection include Greil Marcus's *Lipstick Traces* and my *The Ecstatic Nerve*.

4 This point of subjection has begun to be addressed by Ed Sanders' Investigative Poetics, Banville's historical poems on the Romanticist movement, Hans Richter's personal approach to *Dada: Art and Anti-Art* and Huelsenbeck's *Tales of a Dada Drummer*, not to mention Ball's mythologized history of Zurich Dada in *Tenderenda the Fantist*, Gautier and O'Neddy among other Romanticists in their poetic and quasi-fictional self-representations, Vaneigem's *Cavalier History of Surrealism*, Lamborn Wilson's work on Pirate Utopias, and the various histories/chronicles/fictions of the Neoist Apartment Festivals. The predominance of the first person in the essay that *you*, my dear reader, are currently perusing can be looked at in the same light.

hierarchy will be interposed. (This may be published last, due to the amount of leg-work required.)

4. ***Causal Relationships.*** Kolomiets' caution against promoting, "a genealogy of styles," and of a, "rigid conceptual structure with the powerful relationships of subordination" are well-taken, and I shall experiment in this essay with applying Dada and Surrealist techniques to historical research and analysis. I would argue, nonetheless, that once toppled from its hegemonic position by means of the strategies suggested here and others, causality still has a role to play. As implied above when discussing role-playing, it is necessary for the development of the strategic capacity necessary for the continued survival of inherently tenuous communities; however, it must be vigilant against forming master-narratives, subjecting the specific event to general or abstract systemification, or promoting an instrumentalist conception of the historical process.
5. ***Context.*** Two routes to addressing this issue are suggested, so my response will be two-fold: an essay on the communal spaces (contexts) of the Jeunes-France/Bouzingo group, over-saturated with contextual notes, as per my usual practice; and an under-saturated essay on a Post-NeoAbsurdist event, giving minimal context outside that community's specific micro-history. In an anglophone context, the idea of minimizing context can raise spectres of the hyper-alienated, a-historical and amoral stance of the New Criticism; my attempt here will be to eliminate the context *of* the event's social dynamic, without eliminating the social dimension of the event itself, avoiding formal elements as the parameters of isolation.

These essays done, something, at least, should have been stirred up – and if any historical cadavers are dislodged by our prodding and float to the surface, they can be revived, however grotesque or unexpected the result, in *Révenance*.



shadows, to blockades at the intersection, he's the sea-foam of politics,⁸ the flower of the ridiculous, the prototype of all exaggeration. By nature he's a being of 93 in politics, honorably refined for his fashion, a royal bird for his habits. We're waiting for Poulaine slippers.⁹

After having worn out the patent leather hat and the large blue ribbon, he's just adopted the red hat. The bousingot wears the red hat; add on a hanging cord and two knots and the bousingot will be a cardinal. He was a sailor with patent leather, he'll be a cardinal with the red hat.

A general rule for foreigners. Green men with epaulettes and a gold baldric aren't

colonels, they're hunters; they carve at the table; black men, all black, with ragged coats, and strong soft boots clasping up to mid-thigh, aren't poets or whalers, they're undertakers; men who have red hats, a blue ribbon, and who would be tricolors if they had a white face and linens, are bousingots. The little cafés are overflowing with them, the Pont-Neuf is groaning with them, Sainte-Pélagie has them to spare,¹⁰ the faubourg St-Germain abounds with them.

one in the French wikipedia.)

8 "The sea-foam of politics": the French is "l'écume de la politique," which as far as I can tell either means the froth on the surface, or a more pejorative "the scum/dregs of politics." Since the rest of this is ridiculing their fashion, I went with the more superficial option, but it might instead be meant as a deeper insult.

9 Poulaine slippers (souliers à la Poulaine), also called crakows or crackowes in English, are those medieval shoes with the really long pointy toes. (English wikipedia, French wikipedia.)

10 "~~Sold out of them~~" later edit: [@robertawickham](#) suggested "has them to spare," which I think is better. There's a splotch over the first letter of "_evendre," and "revendre" was my only guess. ~~Even~~

A month ago, you could have seen them in black varnish; it's too late, they're red: the heat has colored them like lobsters, crabs and crayfish. They're not harmful.

Hurry to go and see them, be glad to encounter them, because soon, maybe tomorrow, they'll have green hats like the penniless of old times, or blue hats, like leprechauns of the time when there were leprechauns, or the hats of free men, which is to say no hats.

Hurry, because they're still walking on their feet, they're breathing with their noses, even if the nose is right in the center; we're assured that they eat; it was confirmed to me that they think sometimes.

You might well find them walking in carts, with gloves on their feet, slippers on their hands, if you catch them too late.

Why did they pick red? It's because red is the color of blood, blood which is their color, their principles; it's because red is fire, the color of conflagration, conflagration which is their color; it's because red is the color of anger, anger which is their color; it's because red is the color of one of the three furies of mythology, furies which are their color; it's because red makes itself with firewood, like wine. That's why they adopted the red hat.

Fathers and mothers, whom I honor, if you ask what your sons are doing in Paris, if they're keeping busy, if they're reading, if they're studying, we answer you in the way of newspapers, that they have the red hat, the blue ribbon, the yellow linen.¹¹

Once there was only one man in France who wore a red hat; it was the hangman; he had the right to have a red coat too: that'll come.¹²

Translated by Elizabeth Birdsall

from *Figaro*. Year 7, No. 83 (March 23, 1832). Sole Edition: Paris. from the Revenant Archive.

with that I'm not totally sure I'm translating "Sainte-Pélagie en a à revendre" quite correctly.

11 It's entirely possible that yellow linens were a fashion I just don't know about. My guess, however, is that the mention of "yellow linens" at the end is meant as a cheap shot about bousingot students not doing their laundry often enough and just slumming around in stained shirts.

12 [the original footnote here contained a notification to several interested members of the fandom community that this translation had been posted]



In the book's unsigned frontispiece, the Chevalier de Saint-George is portrayed as extremely light-skinned.

Better than myself – beyond all doubt – to the aid of my warm and inspired discourse, he must have maintained in the reader's heart some love and some pity for this century, all of whose glories we are unanimous in insulting and which we deck out as we please in a mantle of vices, without imagining that for most of these men these vices, which were imposed upon them by their epoch, were at least redeemed by elegance and spirit.

The eighteenth century, that honest child that the Philosophes lost, shall always be an under-appreciated century as long as one separates the *Encyclopédie* from its corruption and England from its faults.¹⁴ We must take on this century not only as an event, but as a question.

A profound question in fact, my dear Duke, which is to know by what unlikely train of events and associations such an epoch, in falling, dragged everything along

with it in its drop: everything, from respect for royalty to respect for property, for the same hammer-blow which struck the throne reduced the colonial system to rubble. See this countryside where every social principle is beaten into submission, where the history of ideas becomes as bizarre as that of mankind! There, each the tournament warrior enters the arena with his colours and armour; we recognise them, we denominate them: Voltaire, Franklin, Mirabeau streak across these times like speeding meteors. Around them are grouped paradox and truth, ignorance and knowledge; the camps are formed, they thrash, they speak, they dispute, as to whom shall be king! Never have we seen such a movement and such tumult; the army of rhetoricians swarmed in everywhere, the most mediocre receives the watchword,

¹⁴ I have retained the French orthography in both words to emphasise the historical specificity of Beauvoir's references to the Revolutionary project of the French Enlightenment polymaths, lost by rendering the simple English Philosophers and Encyclopedia.

obeys Diderot while waiting for them to obey Marat.¹⁵ As the pamphlets were more than ever the order of the day, it is difficult to form a precise idea of men; they exalt them to the skies, or drag them in the sewer. More than once, and when the lava should have cooled, what text for the writer, what unstoppable curiosity to traverse this immense battlefield and to recognise each of these dead faces! If it must be confessed to you, my dear Duke, I only accept such a perilous mission with a shudder. At each shroud that I have lifted up in order to examine the men who once rubbed shoulders with the heroes of this book, my heart pounded, I was afraid. When I found myself face to face with Philippe-Equality, there alone did I regain my breath and courage that one is excessively judged, is that not true?

After these scattered comments, you can already see for yourself, my dear Duke, that this book should be at same time a story of a man, and of an idea; that idea is this:

Prior 1492, there was an opinion which did not exist, or which at any rate impacted nobody in the social order; since that epoch, it has spread into two worlds, and today it has taken refuge in one alone.

This opinion merits study.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus conquers the New-World.

By 1592, the primitive population of a great part of the New-World is exterminated by the whites.

By 1692, the whites resolve to transport blacks into these very countries in which they have exterminated the population. Louis XIV published the Code for Blacks. This race is thrown in with beasts of burden, the jew himself is less oppressed.

Thus it is posited in principle that the black or colored man is deprived of the gift of intelligence.

The 18th Century, that great arsenal against prejudices, attacks this opinion.

In 1798, the blacks massacre the whites in Saint-Domingue. Three negroes, Toussaint-l'Ouverture, Dessalines et Rigaud, compete for some time, not only against the politics, but also the armies of France, Spain, and England.

Since then—in more than one country—and especially in France, men of color

15 *les plus indifférens reçoivent le mot d'ordre, et l'on obéit à Diderot en attendant que l'on obéisse à Marat.*

proved that they did not wish to remain strangers either to political struggles, nor to those of the mind.

Nonetheless the prejudice is still all-powerful in America!

.....

I only put forth this idea here as a fact; only the story evolved from that fact is intimately linked to that of the man whose strange figure appears perpetually in these pages.

This man, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, the brilliant mulatto, the man of attacks, of good luck and feasts; unique man, indeed, whose skeleton a propitious chance made me discover, on which still hangs a Tonkin sword, decorated with a beautiful knot of silver.

Should it appear frivolous, at first glance, the life of such a man, I dare promise, dear Duke, that it contains adventures of a drama intimate enough to arouse your attention. Saint-Georges set foot in turn upon two craters, that of Saint-Domingue and that of Paris; in both revolution seethed. Misrepresented by jealous slander, the life of this *black Don Juan*, as he was dubbed by his contemporaries, must have come to resent the effect of certain intimate perils which the loyalty and nobility of his soul rejected. The first line¹⁶ portrays that of a prince who only called himself his benefactor in order to exploit him to his profit. The second section of the book returns upon this prince the disgrace of this odious calculation. I should add that only by force of care and studious searches have I managed, dear Duke, to discover in this man the distinctive features and traits which contribute as much to the history of the eighteenth century as his do. Oral tradition, which is to say informal conversation with various living remainders from his day, kindly storytellers who have leafed on my behalf through the archives of their memory, has better repaid my efforts than the dry skin of biographies and [bibliographic] notices, all inept, contradictory or truncated.¹⁷

16 Untranslatable pun with what is in English the “front line” in a military sense.

17 *Beauvoir’s Note*: We do not pretend that we make ourselves exclusive biographer; far from it! and we count on using more than once the privilege granted to novelists. But for promised biographies it’s another thing, and he admits to making them put their finger on their blunders. The Universal Biography says, in the article ‘Saint-Georges’, that he enrolled in the musketeers some time after his arrival in Paris. Here is one erroneous fact. For to be simply an officer in the army, he had to prove nobility, all the more so for a body as privileged as the musketeers.

To contest the immense successes of the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, his grace, his radiance, would be to deny the popularity of his name.

Translated by Olchar E. Lindsann

from Roger de Beauvoir, *Le Chevalier de Saint-Georges*. 1840. 2nd Ed.. Bibliothèque Choisie,

H.-L. Delloye, Paris. Vol. 1. from the collection of the Revenant Archive.

[illegible]

A historiography of the oppressed will always be, in part, a historiography of crime. Since time immemorial, those who have felt disenfranchised from their dominant culture have enjoyed tales of outlaws, robbers, pirates, and other criminals outwitting the avatars of power; examples include the cunning thievery of Odysseus, the voyages of Sinbad, the adventures of Robin Hood, the exploits of privateers and pirates, Billy the Kid, Bonnie and Clyde, gangster rap, and on and on. The following text is drawn from an anthology of biographies of famous British outlaws, complete with the rather rough wood-cuts that adorned the ephemeral press of the day. Presented simply as a rollicking (yet cautionary) yarn about a master scam artist, it in fact portrays a woman who turned every stereotype, hypocrisy, social convention, and misogynist habit that she encountered against her “victims” – all of them predatory wealthy men. A pencil annotation on the copy in the Revenant Archive attributes the anonymous text to Charles Whitehead.

The German Princess (1836)

by Charles Whitehead (Published Anonymously)

Though this remarkable female character was denominated a German Princess, for a reason which will be mentioned in the course of her narrative, she was a native of Canterbury, and her father a chorister of that cathedral. From her sprightly and volatile disposition,

One finds with astonishment in this selfsame Universal Biography that Saint-Georges would have been named captain of the guard of the Duke of Chartres (also known as Philippe-Equality). He must in truth have had no such idea at that period to advance such a supposition, given that to be captain of the guard of a prince of the blood, one had to prove nobility dating from the year 1399, according to the statutes; to have been presented at Versailles and to have obtained the agreement of the king to exercise this duty near a prince of the royal blood. It is captain of the hunt that the Bibliography should say. Saint-Georges owed in fact this place to Madame de Montesson.

she at an early period took delight in reading the novels that were at that time fashionable, — such as *Parismus and Parismanus*, *Don Bellianis of Greece*, *Amadis de Gaul*, and *Cassandra and Cleopatra* ; and in a little time really believed what she wished, even that she was a princess.

But in her marriage she lost sight of her exalted conceptions, and united her fortune with a journeyman shoemaker. She resided with him until she had two children, who both died in their infancy. The industrious shoemaker was unable to support her extravagance, so that she at last left him, to seek her fortune elsewhere.

A woman of her figure, beauty, and address, was not long before she procured another husband. She went to Dover, and married a surgeon of that place, but, being apprehended and tried at Maidstone for having two husbands, by some dexterous manoeuvre she was acquitted.

* * *

[She goes to Europe, grafts money off of a few wealthy vacationers, and returns to England in the guise of a disinherited German 'Princess']

* * *

She landed at Billingsgate, one morning very early in the end of March 1663, and found no house open until she came to the Exchange inn, where she attained to the dignity of a German princess in the following manner. In this inn, she got into the company of some gentlemen who, she perceived, were full of money, and these addressing her in a rude manner, she began to weep most bitterly, exclaiming that it was extremely hard for her to be reduced to this extreme distress, who was once a princess. Here she recited the story of her extraction and education, and much about her pretended father, the lord Henry Vanwolway, a prince of the empire, and independent of every man but his Imperial Majesty. "Certainly," said she, "any gentleman here present may conceive what a painful situation this must be to me to be thus reduced, brought up as I have been under the care of an indulgent father, and in all the luxuries of a court. But, alas! what do I say? — Indulgent father! was it not his cru-

elty which banished me, his only daughter, from his dominions, merely for marrying, without his knowledge, -a nobleman of the court whom I loved to excess? Was it not my fault -her who occasioned my dear lord and husband to be cut off in the bloom of his age, by falsely accusing him of a design against his person, — a deed which his virtuous soul abhorred ?" Here she pretended that the poignancy of her feelings would allow her to relate no more of her unfortunate history.

The whole company was touched with compassion at the melancholy tale, which she related with so much unaffected simplicity, that they had not a doubt of its truth. Compassionating her unfortunate situation, they requested her acceptance of all the money they had about them, promising to return again with more. They were as good as their promise, and she ever after went by the name of the unfortunate German Princess.

* * *

She was then introduced as an actress among the players, and by them supported for some time. Upon the strength of her popularity the house was often crowded, and the public curiosity was excited by, a woman who had made such a figure in the world, and was receiving great applause in her dramatic capacity. She generally appeared in characters suited to her habits of life, and those scenes which had been rendered familiar to her by former deception and intrigues. But what tended chiefly to promote her fame, was a play called the "German Princess," written principally upon her account, in which she spoke the following prologue in such a manner as gained universal applause.

I've passed one trial, but it is my fear
I shall receive a rigid sentence here :
You think me a bold cheat, but case 't were so,
"Which of you are not ? Now you 'd swear, I know ;
But do not, lest that you deserve to be

Censured worse than you can censure me ;
The world 's a cheat, and we that move in it
In our degrees do exercise our wit;
And better 't is to get a glorious name,
However got, than live by common fame.

The Princess had too much mercury in her constitution to remain long within the bounds of a theatre, when London itself was too limited for her volatile disposition. She did not, however, leave the theatre until she had procured many admirers. Her history was well known, as well as her accomplishments and her gallantry, and introduced her into company. She was easy of access, but in society carried herself with an affected air of indifference.

✻ ✻ ✻

[A string of liaisons, following a similar pattern, ensues.]

✻ ✻ ✻

Her numerous and varied adventures would far exceed the limits appropriated to one life in this volume. It is sufficient to observe, that rather than her hands should be unemployed, or her avaricious disposition unsatisfied, she would carry off the most trifling article ; that, according to the proverb, all was fish that came into her net; and that when a watch, a diamond, or piece of plate could not be found, a napkin, a pair of sheets, or any article of wearing apparel, would suffice.

from Anonymous [Charles Whitehead], *Lives and Exploits of the Most Noted Highwaymen, Robbers and Murderers, of All Nations, Drawn From the Most Authentic Sources and Brought Down to the Present Time*. (Undated, c. 1850) Silas Andrus & Son: Hartford.

from the collection of the Revenant Archive.

[illegible]



EDITORIAL BREAKFAST AT THE CHAT NOIR.

Editorial Breakfast at the Chat Noir, 1887. by [David?] Merwart. *The Chat Noir* cabaret was one of the few real mixing-grounds of avant-garde subculture with mainstream popular culture in the late 19th Century, becoming famous for its riotous combination of riotous dance, experimental comedy, both cutting-edge and dance-hall music, avant-garde poetry, and its eclectic clientele of Bohemian students and artists, urban workers, Symbolist writers, absinthe-addicts, society dilettantes, sex-workers, and eventually curious tourists.

Soon it launched its own journal, which became both a weekly document of the micro-community who met regularly at the cabaret and an influential magazine of avant-garde humour with a readership of 20,000. Though the masthead lists Rodolphe Salis and Alphonse Allais as editors, writing and editing the journal was a collective effort, usually done in the cabaret itself in informal conditions, as shown in this etching from Harpers. It also lists Maurice Iabey as "Administrator" and two "secretaries of direction": a rotating cast of Chat Noir habitués, plus occasional fleeting editorial positions such as "Musician of the Future," held by Donizetti in December 1889 and "Always forgotten," held by Chapsal the same month. Its playful, self-referential communal nature resonates strongly with many later avant journals such as *Fuck You: A Magazine of the Arts*, *The Lost and Found Times*, and *the in-Appropriated Press*.

from *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. Vol. 78, Dec. 1888 May, 1889. Harpers: New York.

Fernand Clerget and Albert Sériéys were among the more elusive writers of the Chat Noir group, despite having published regularly in the journal. The group delighted in sound-play and often seem to compete for the most outré rhyme schemes around which to spin their verses, usually to very funny ends. This reflects the Chat Noir's musical orientation, and many of these poems were performed to music.

*Clerget's 'Ballad of the Poor Rhymers' uses only two rhyme terminations in 28 lines, five of which are answered by the word *sommes*, and another by *assomes*. It may well be the result of a writing game or challenge, for Albert Sériéys' poem, published on the same day directly beside it, also plays heavily on the same terminal vowel, and also rhymes *sommes* with itself. The most appropriate way to render both poems' virtuoso sound-work and lurching, insistent rhythm seemed to be through a ludic transduction of their sound.*

Balled at napalm air-Rimmers

by Fernand Clerget (1889)

Chewy fremen sat butresses
 Ochre ants and savior the psalms;
 Churching pours liquor eros is,
 Sand river delights our new psalms,
 The bell it toils all blue psalms
 Cleans us all mason no clammers;
 Rich desperate, leggers of psalms,
 Who saw vaunt napalm air-Rimmers?

March and debut in scent asses,
 Talkey suit on our noose is psalms:
 The gist is you'd hiss us passes;
 Prince of preen, t'wacky psalms
 Tests who jaded train ail her psalms,
 A toy, Volley, key desk humours:
 Too sure, too sure maim fat homes!...
 Who saw vaunt napalm air-Rimmers?

Ballade des Pauvres Rimeurs

by Fernand Clerget (1889)

Fuyant chemins et buts tracés
 Où courent sans savoir les hommes;
 Cherchant pour leurs corps harassés,
 Sans rêver des lits où nous sommes,
 La belle étoile et les beaux sommes
 Qui ne sont mais en nos clameurs;
 Riches d'esprit, légers de sommes,
 Où s'en vont les pauvre Rimeurs?

Marchand de butins entassés,
 Toi qui sous ton or nous assomes:
 Légiste issu des us passés;
 Prince suprême, toi qui sommes
 Tes sujets de traîner leurs sommes,
 Et toi, Valet, qui dessous meurs:
 Toujours, toujours mêmes fantômes!...
 Où s'en vont les pauvres Rimeurs?

Any less chumps, the boys glassy,
 A semester days atoms
 Keats only corpse in lacy,
 Saw vaunt chaw talk elk ever toms
 Daring door-key solid bombs
 They know saturn well rumours,
 As you float perfect dollar palms:
 Who saw vaunt napalm air-Rimmers?

INVOICE

Prince, March on, queso vote-domes
 Rally language they say moors,
 Near hay jam hay acid and Gnomes
 Who saw vaunt napalm air-Rimmers.

Mellow Tea (1889)

by Albert Sérieys

a Friend o' my Sod

The man to the grass me wave
 Man plunger lit tundra law,
 Salve Rabelais I'm a slave
 Llama sabre meal trip fall.

The man seeps launch along draw
 If you say, the man stalk a lean,
 My font sunday, gondola fawn,
 A luscious son demand o' lean.

Emmi les champs, les bois glacés,
 En ces mystères des atomes
 Qui tiennent les corps enlacés,
 S'en vont, chantant quelques vieux tomes
 De rimes d'or qui sont les baumes
 De nos éternelles rumeurs,
 Et soufflant parfois dans leurs paumes:
 Où s'en vont les pauvres Rimeurs?

ENVOI

Prince, Marchand, qui sous vos dômes
 Raillez l'angoisse des semeurs,
 N'irez jamais au cie des Nomes
 Où s'en vont les pauvres Rimeurs.

Mélodie (1889)

by Albert Sérieys

à Fernand Mazade

Les mains dont les grâces mièvres
 M'infligèrent leurs tendres lois,
 Savent rapeller à mes lèvres
 Les baisers permis d'autrefois.

Les mains si blanche aux longs doigts
 Effusés, les mains tant câlines,
 Me font songer, quand je les vois,
 A la chanson des mandolines.

*Gleb Kolomiets is extremely active in the contemporary Russian avant-garde, as writer, theorist, publisher, translator, organiser, curator, and historian. He is the editor of the journal **Slova**, an important point of international exchange among radical, anti-commercial creative workers; founder of the decentralized underground press **Mycelium**; and has organised many cultural events in Smolensk and elsewhere, including the **First Russian Asemic Exhibit**.*

How to Find the Historical Unconscious? (2017)

by Gleb Kolomiets

Revolutions often give birth to totalitarian regimes. These are cases in which events and social movements, declaring their goals as emancipatory, become systematic practices of repression and imprisonment in the process of their unfolding. These are the cases in which people, while striving for the fulfillment of their desires, accomplish something external to these desires, something antithetical to them. Hegel would call such situations ‘the cunning of Reason’, realizations of an inviolable historical rule governing the destinies of people, nations and states.

On the other hand, it is possible to explain such transformations through the influence of the unconscious. The cases when revolutions degenerate are those in which conscious desire for liberation is accompanied by unconscious desire for enslavement or submission. The more the desire for liberation is satisfied, the more is dissatisfaction with the delay in the execution of another, secret desire, and hence the urge to satisfy it grows.

This may also be the case when individuals or small communities attempt to reclaim the history of the arts for themselves.¹⁸ What if the desire to use history as an instrument of liberation is accompanied by an unconscious desire to make it an implement of repression? It is reasonable to expect such an opportunity, if only to make sure that art historians with

18 For more detailed discussion of this topic see: Kolomiets G. “What Governs the History of Art?” // *Rêvenance* #1, p. 6

emancipatory intentions do not have such unconscious desires, and that the appropriation of history for personal needs is necessarily carried out with motivations of freedom, rather than oppression.

An analysis of the unconscious of a historian is a complex task. First of all, there is the problem of access to this unconsciousness. The mere fact that the result of the historian's activity is text raises many questions about the possibility of access to the unconsciousness through the text. How to separate elements of a text that appear as a result of conscious action from those that originate from a historian's unconscious? Can a text give the same kind of access to the unconsciousness as the subject's speech (psychoanalysis), behavior (behaviorism) or the scientific picture of physiological functions (neuropsychology)? Can the writing as such contain unconscious elements?

Questions of this kind indicate that the attainment of external access to a historian's unconscious is either a difficult or virtually impossible task. Therefore, for tactical reasons, it seems valid to use not the external 'psychoanalysis' of a historian, but his self-analysis: before beginning the appropriation of history, it is reasonable to make sure that it is not intertwined with interests of oppression. Therefore, it is important to find a procedure that would help us to identify the influence of our unconscious on our own historical discourse.

Hints for finding at least one of the possible elements of such a procedure are found in Michel Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*. The philosopher begins to develop his archaeology by removing from the historical discourse a number of concepts - tradition, influence, development, evolution and 'spirit'.¹⁹ Foucault characterizes these concepts as "ready-made syntheses, <...> groupings that we normally accept before any examination, <...> links whose validity is recognized from the outset".²⁰ Thus, Foucault discovers in historical methodology a

19 *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Routledge, 2002) – pp. 23-24.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 24.

set of concepts that are used out of habit, without preliminary discussion, without justification of their pressing need for historical research – and therefore unconsciously.

Moreover, Foucault characterizes the concepts he eliminates as directed towards identification of various historical phenomena and their totalization within the framework of an abstract scheme. For example, the purpose of the concept of tradition is "... to give a special temporal status to a group of phenomena that are both successive and identical (or at least similar); it makes it possible to rethink the dispersion of history in the form of the same; it allows a reduction of the difference proper to every beginning, in order to pursue without discontinuity the endless search for the origin; tradition enables us to isolate the new against a background of permanence, and to transfer its merit to originality, to genius, to the decisions proper to individuals".²¹

This kind of hierarchization can be compared with the hierarchization of the subjects of power within a totalitarian state - the differences between them are eliminated in order to identify their identities as citizens subordinate to the government in the same degree, with all spheres of life equally open to observation, control and management. One can continue this analogy and say that a historian using 'ready-made' concepts unconsciously contributes to the establishment of power relations organized on the totalitarian principle within the historical discourse. Of course, the practice of tyrannical power differs from the practice of the historian's ordering of abstract, inanimate phenomena of the past. But on the other hand, one of the self-evident, in my opinion, signs of totalitarianism is deprivation of citizens' human rights, neglect of their qualities of independent autonomous individuals, which leads to turning them into abstract inanimate objects of governance.

Foucault's methodology with the concepts of historical discourse can also be used when we reclaim art history for ourselves – it could be important to establish which of the concepts used by a historian are accepted as necessary by default, habitually, unconsciously.

21 Ibid., p. 23.

Having discovered these concepts, the historian can consider their inherent modes of the hierarchization of historical phenomena, which, in turn, can be analyzed from the point of view of power relations, as well as tactical and strategic goals of their application.

If it turns out that the conscious intention of the historian to bring history out of the totalitarian academic structures is accompanied by an unconscious desire to establish his own undivided power over history, it is reasonable to refuse to use these concepts or, at any rate, to change their content in such a way that their way of ordering of historical phenomena will take non-repressive forms.

[illegible]

***Translator's note:** In every era, there are precursors to the disasters to come; and they always come. Disasters which are as inevitable and as inexorable as the foregone conclusions of a classical Greek tragedy. In every age there are voices unheeded that sound the clarion-call to defend, to shelter, to flee. Our own turbulent epoch is no exception. If only we had ears to hear the neglected Cassandras whose cries we mute with our indifference...*

Glas (1897)

by Ivan Gilkin

O cloches lourdes, cloches lentes,
Dolentes,
Râlantes,

Cloches des sinistres journées,
 Damnées,
 Damnées,

Cloches de deuil, cloches d'alarmes
En armes,
En larmes,

O cloches de sang, cloches d'âcres
 Massacres,
 Massacres,

Knell (1897)

by Ivan Gilkin

O heavy bells, sluggish bells,
Mournful,
Maddening,

Bells of evil days,
Condemned,
Condemned,

Bells of grief, alarm bells
Armed,
In tears,

O bells of blood, bitter bells,
Slaughter,
Slaughter,

O cloches, cloches, cloches, cloches,
Plus proches,
Plus proches,

Sonnez, cloches, cloches funèbres,
Ténèbres !
Ténèbres !

Voici que dans l'air qui s'étonne,
Il tonne,
Il tonne !

Sous les neiges de flamme comme
Sodome,
Sodome,

Périssent les cités infâmes
En flammes
En flammes !

Cloches sur les maisons où monte
La honte,
La honte,

Cloches sur l'église où les râbles
Des diables,
Des diables,

Remplacent pour l'Eucharistie
L'hostie,
L'hostie,

Sonnez sur le meurtre et l'inceste
La peste,
La peste,

Et sur la Foi qui s'effémine,
Famine,
Famine,

O bells, bells, bells, bells,
Nearer,
Nearer,

Ring, bells, funereal bells,
Shadows !
Shadows !

Here in the air which astounds itself,
Roaring,
Roaring !

Beneath the snows of fire like
Sodom,
Sodom,

Destroying the infamous cities
In flames
In flames !

Bells upon the houses where rises
Shame,
Shame,

Bells on the church where the rabble
Of devils,
Of devils,

Replace the Eucharist
The host,
The host,

Toll upon murder and incest
Plague,
Plague,

And upon the Faith which emasculates itself,
Famine,
Famine,

And upon envy and hate
 War,
 War

But your reproaches are unheeded,
O bells,
O bells,

And it is in vain that for anyone,
 I toll,
 I toll !

[illegible]

The Symbolist journal **Mercury de France**, begun by Alfred Valette using his bedroom as an editorial office, eventually grew into one of the largest and most influential literary reviews in France; it published work by Jarry, Valéry, Apollinaire, Fort, and countless others. The reviewer in this brief article, Hirsch, had connections to both the Symbolist and Realist movements. By 1912, these movements had given birth to newer avant-gardes, whose infusion with Modernism has often blinded historians (and writers) to the corollary continuities. **The following short review of Cravan's legendary self-published *Maintenant* (Now), which he vended out of a wheelbarrow in the streets of Paris, gives a glimpse of the older generation of the avant-garde's reaction to the first stirrings of what would soon become the Dada movement – one in which they seem to see progression rather than rupture. The *Mercury* printed the final stanza of the following poem with the review.**

by Charles-Henry Hirsch

Now (No. 1, April), "literary review", of a yet-secret periodicity, is a paper of 8 pages for presenting: Whistle, a poem of its director, Mr. Arthur Cravan, "Unpublished Documents on Oscar Wilde," signed W. Cooper, and two announcements of restaurants, of which one is a "house recommended to those gentlemen the students".

The verses of Mr. Arthur Cravan are those of a fervent disciple of Walt Whitman. They clearly indicate a poet anxious about the modern, and gifted with lyricism:

Whistle (1912)

by Arthur Cravan

□

The Atlantic's rhythm rocks the oceanliners,
And up in the air where the gasses dance so with the pinwheels
Whilst whistles the heroic express which arrives at Havre,
Press on like bears, the athletic sailors.
New York! New York! That's where I'd like to live!
There I see science marry
Industry,
In an audacious modernity.
And in the palaces
Globes,
Dazzling the retinas,
With their ultra-violet rays;
The American telephone,
the tender nature
Of elevators...

□

The English Company's inspiring vessel
Saw me take my place aboard terribly excited,
And entirely delighted with the beautiful turbine vessel's amenities,
Like the installation of electricity,
Casting light in torrents on the throbbing cabin.
The cabin burning with copper jambs,
Upon which, in seconds, played my drunken hands
To shiver roughly in the metal's chill,
And douse my appetite in this plunging thrill,
All the while the green influence of the new varnish
Clearly screeched out the date, when, discarding the bills,
In the deranged green of the grass, I rolled like an egg.
How my shirt befuddled me! And to feel your shudder
In the style of a horse, at one with nature!
How I'd wanted to graze! How I'd wanted to run!
And how I was naturally on deck, battered by the music intense;
And how the cold is powerful as physical sense,

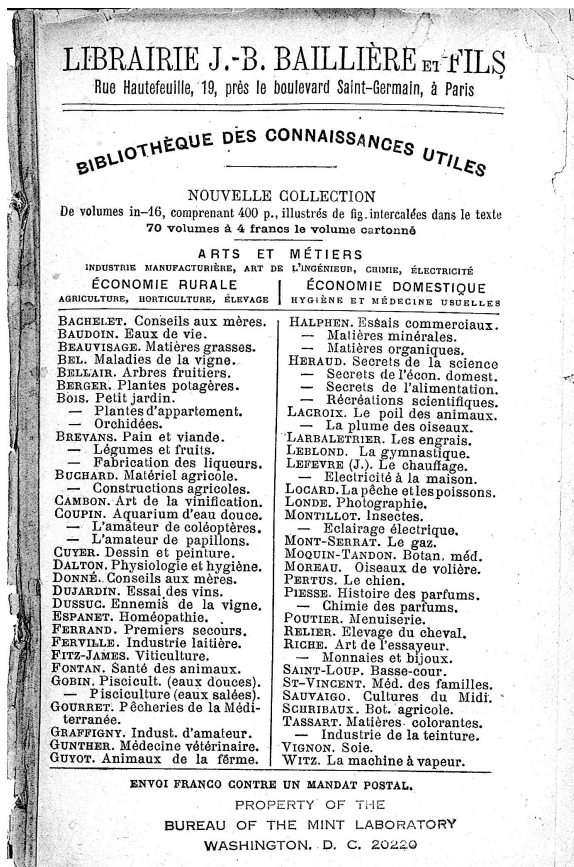
*Translated by Olchar Lindsann
with advice from Kala Ladenheim*

from *Mercur de France*, Vol. 47, No.357. May 1, 1912. from the Revenant Archive.
& *Maintenant*, No. 1, April, 1912.

~~~~~

# A Mystery Correspondent!

In the first issue of *Rêvenance* I encouraged, "contributions that are humble in size, but striking in their interest or intriguing in their implications." Here's the first, which falls under 'intriguing'. It was posted from Scottsdale, Arizona I have no correspondents) from Dolores Read. She did indeed live in the city at one point, but (I am a researcher after all) turns out to have died 14 years ago, in 2003. So this is truly a Revenant. (Now, it's *postmarked* from a city where I *do* know someone, but I shall keep mum.) It contained no note or explanation, only an undated (1894 or '95) 16-page catalog of a scientific bookseller in Paris, stamped as property of the U.S. Mint Laboratory in Washington, DC. and containing checkmarks indicating the purchase of eight books – most on hypnotism. The Mint Lab must have had some pretty interesting experiments going . . . Here are the first and last pages.



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ENVOI FRANCO CONTRE UN MANDAT SUR LA POSTE  
(3)



*Francis Vielé-Griffin was born in Virginia, but lived for most of his life in France and never wrote in English. He was one of the most formally experimental poets of his generation. With Paul Adam, he co-edited the influential Symbolist-Socialist journal **Entretiens**, which gave equal space to avant-garde culture and to Socialist news articles, essays and polemics, with heavy anarchist leanings. The note's precise date and context are not known.*

**[T?]rust** (Undated, c. 1904)

*by Francis Vielé-Griffin*

My favourite [book/cure]

Trust

because unless i am deceived,  
it is this first [book/cure] of inter-  
psychology in which we could  
see four populations yankee  
Cuban, egyptian and french  
spanned by one single idea,  
modified by it, and  
modifying it- in their turn, depending  
on the nature of their elites and of  
their masses in plain view.

Which has the most success

Trust

Mon [livre/cure] préféré

## Le Trust

parceque si je ne m abuse,  
c est ce premier [book/cure] d'inter-  
psychologie où on puisse  
voir quatre populations yankée  
Cubaine, égyptienne et française  
traversées par une même idee,  
modifiée par elle, et la  
modifiant- a leur tour, selon  
les caractères de leur elites et de  
leurs foules en pleine vie.

Lequel a eu le plus de succès

## Le Trust

Mon livre préféré  
Le Crest

parceque se je ne m'abuse,  
 c'est le premier livre d'inter-  
 psychologie où l'on puisse  
 voir quatre populations yaudées  
 cubaine, égyptienne et française  
 traversées par une même idée,  
 modifiée par elle, et la  
 modifiant à leur tour, selon  
 les caractères de leur cité et de  
 leur foule en pleine vie.

Lequel a eu le plus de  
 succès  
Le Crest

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